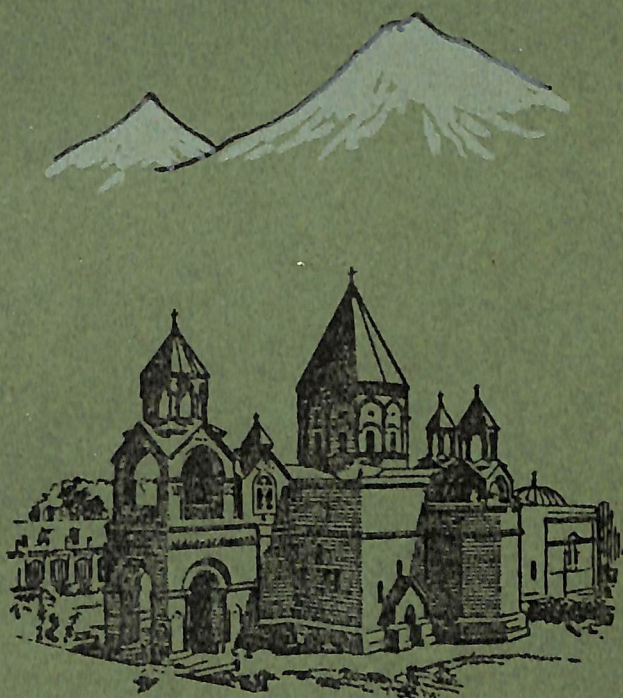


ARARAT.

A SEARCHLIGHT ON ARMENIA.

Vol. I. No. 10. London : APRIL, 1914. Price 6d.

Annual Subscription 6 Shillings.



All communications affecting this periodical should be addressed to the Editor, "Ararat," The Armenian United Association of London, 44, Queen's Road, Bayswater, London, W.

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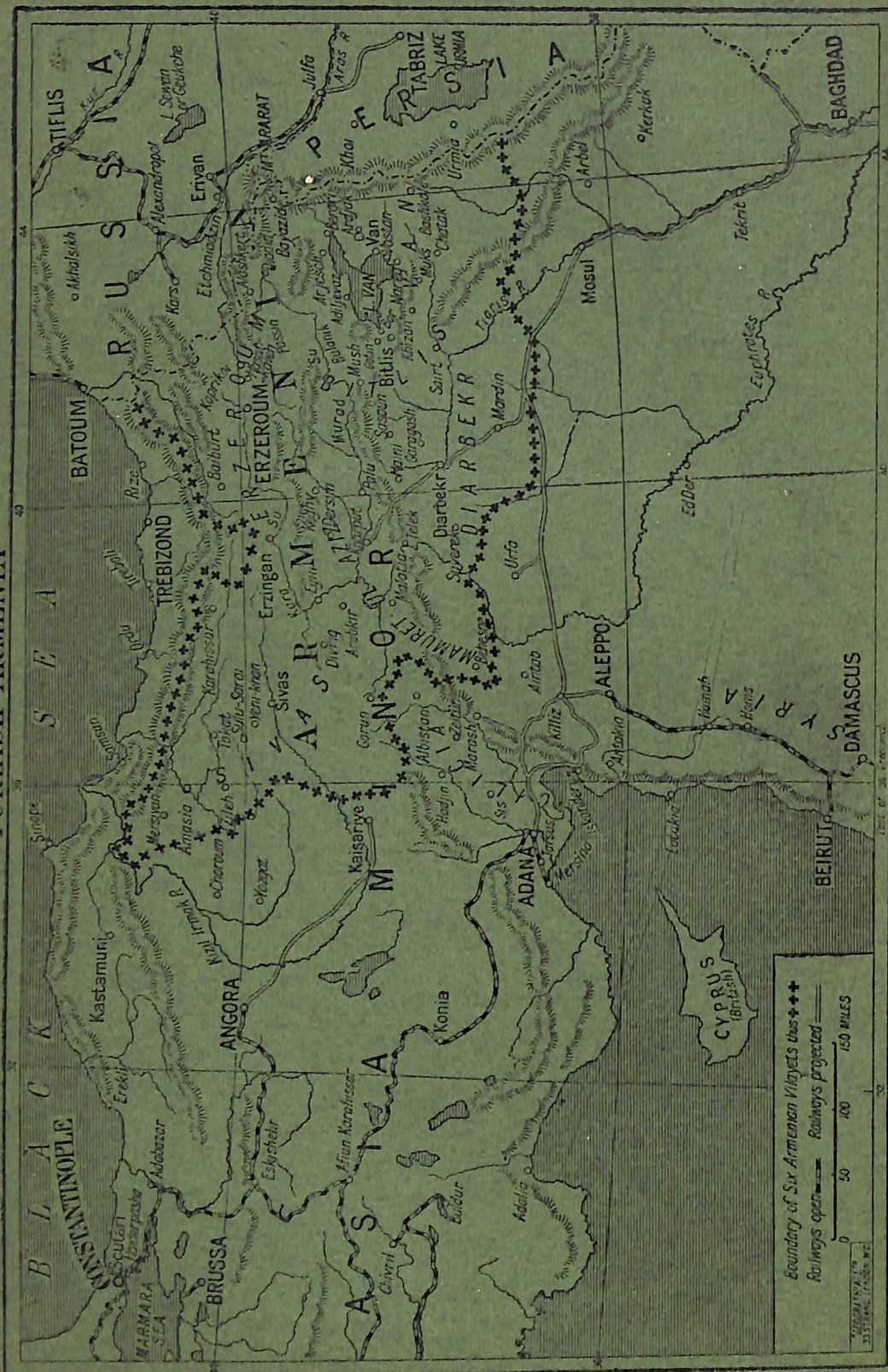
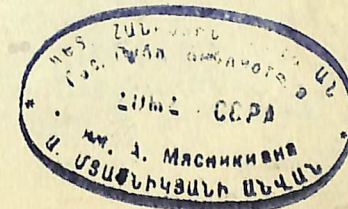
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TURKISH ARMENIA

Current Notes.

We give in these pages an account of the Kurdish raid in Armenia, which, according to Turkish accounts, was happily ended by the discomfiture of the Kurds. This news has been officially communicated to the world from Constantinople ; and in reading the accounts it would appear that the raid was sudden and unpremeditated. Might we be permitted to ask the Turkish Government whether the raid was not expected for some time ? Was it not known to them that Sheik Selim was openly distributing arms to the Kurds at Chatak, not very distant from Bitlis, early in March ; that he was actually captured ; and that while being conveyed to Bitlis, he was rescued by his own people ? Is it not known to them that the Vali of Bitlis actually entered into negotiations with him for a pretended declaration of his allegiance to the Government ; and that on his refusal, Selim pitched his camp in the neighbourhood, within five miles of the town ? We must wait for trustworthy information from other than Turkish sources before we can be certain that all danger is past, and that Turkish efforts are genuinely intended for the suppression of what might yet lead to an appalling catastrophe.

Mr. Aneurin Williams, by a question in the House of Commons on April 8th, tried to elicit from the Foreign Secretary if anything was officially known by the Government with regard to this raid. The following answer was given to him :—

“ I understand that disputes between the Turkish Authorities and the Kurdish tribes in the Bitlis district recently culminated in open hostilities. The Government forces were unable to prevent the entry of the rebellious tribesmen into the town, but an official *communiqué* of the Turkish Government states that they have now been driven out. This report is confirmed by local Missionaries. I understand no lives of Christians were lost.

... “ With regard to the position of the scheme of reforms for the Armenian Vilayets on which I believe my hon. friend also desires information, the position is practically the same as it was when my right hon. friend made a statement on March 18, and I have nothing to add to what he then said.”

With regard to the last sentence in the above reply, we are irresistably drawn to the article on “ The Hamidian Method ” in this issue. We may not be inclined to endow M. Victor Bérard with

prophetic qualities, but he has considerable knowledge of the question he is dealing with, and we have a right to respect his experience and his shrewd insight into character. Two months have now elapsed, and the comedy of selecting the two Inspectors-General is still being enacted, with what success we fear to say. Several names have from time to time been put forward in the public press, and the very latest information is that the choice has fallen on Colonel Hoff, a Norwegian, and M. Westenek, a Dutchman, who is Chief of the Provincial Administration of the Dutch East Indies. In face of the alarming condition of affairs in Armenia, we trust that the responsible Ministers in Constantinople will see to it that for once, in the interests of their own Empire, their proverbial procrastination is not allowed to stand in the way of a rapid adoption of the selected candidates, and of the promulgation of the reform scheme, which has been awaiting the formality of such selection.

It is perhaps right to mention that, apart from Kurdish unrest, a strong party of Turks themselves are showing a restive spirit in view of the coming reforms, and boycott is active in Turkey itself against the Armenians, in spite of instructions from official quarters dissuading such acts. It needs all the efforts of the very few statesmen existing in the Turkish capital to steer the ship of State into smooth waters; and it is a heavy responsibility on their shoulders whether Armenia resolves itself or not into another Macedonia for the Turkish Empire in Asia.

The most recent news regarding the Kurds in Armenia is again from the *Daily Telegraph's* correspondent at Constantinople, who wired on Friday, April 17th:—

“The news of the capture of the important Kurdish Derebey Seid Ali, at Khizan, where the Kurds took refuge after their flight from Bitlis, has produced an excellent impression in diplomatic and Armenian circles, for if the troops continue vigorously to pursue the Derebeys who were compromised in the recent events, and keep an eye on the others who are ready to attempt outrages on the first opportunity, tranquillity will return to the sorely tried provinces.

“As for Sheik Selim, who sought asylum in the Russian Consulate at Bitlis, the Minister of the Interior has just ordered the Governor of that town to telegraph a detailed report, mentioning all the crimes against common law perpetrated by Selim, so that it may form the basis of a simple demand by the Porte upon

the Russian Embassy for the delivery of the criminal, and not a demand for extradition, for if international law recognises the possession by the foreign missions of certain diplomatic immunities, it does not accord them the ancient right of asylum.”

In our last issue we drew attention to the dinner that was to be given to Professors Hagopian and Thounaian by the Armenian colony of London at the Holborn Restaurant on March 27th. At this dinner, which was well attended by members of the colony, opportunity was taken of tendering to Prof. G. Thounaian congratulations on his election to the Turkish Parliament as an Armenian representative, and as Deputy for Cæsarea. Mr. H. N. Mosditchian presided, and after the toast of the King, proposed the health of the Catholicos of Etchmiadzin, and acknowledged with deep gratitude his earnest efforts on behalf of Armenia. He next proposed the health of the two professors, both of whom had rendered signal services to the national cause in this country, and he ended by wishing Prof. Thounaian success in the labours he was about to undertake. The latter, in his reply, showed how deeply sensible he was of the difficulties before him, and how determined he was to face them with courage and with the hope of ultimate benefit, not only to Armenia, but to the Turkish Empire, to Christians and Moslems alike, irrespective of creed. The health of the ladies was proposed in a happy speech by Mr. Arslanian, and was responded to with much feeling by Madame Thounaian. The success of the gathering was so remarkable, that many of those present expressed a hope that the colony would institute an annual dinner, which would be instrumental in fostering a feeling of cohesion and unity among its members.

On Friday, April 27th, the Armenian Committee of London is giving a dinner at the Trocadero in honour of Mr. Aneurin Williams, M.P., the Chairman of the British Armenia Committee. Mr. Williams is well known to Armenians for the strong line he has taken in defence of their cause. His efforts on their behalf were invaluable before he entered the House of Commons, when his presence at the Paris Conference in November last added considerable weight to the resolutions adopted. Since his entry into Parliament, he has kept a watchful eye over our affairs, and has not missed opportunities of eliciting information from the Foreign Office when circumstances required it. The chair at this dinner will be taken by His Grace Archbishop Utudjian of Manchester; the health of Mr. Williams will be proposed by Mr. H. N. Mosditchian; and on Lieut.-Col. G. M. Gregory will devolve the task of proposing the toast of the British Armenia Committee, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P., responding. Mr. Noel Buxton, M.P., will propose “The Cause of Armenia,” and Mr. K. Funduklian, of Manchester, will respond. We hope to give an account of the proceedings in our next issue.

The partiality shown for literature is traditional with Armenians, and, in spite of the worldly cares which surround most of them, the malady of book-hunger is never absent. So far back as the fifth century of our era the best libraries of the world were ransacked and their contents transcribed into the new written language which was just then invented—a monument of industry which saved from oblivion the works of many a well-known writer of the ancients. The Armenian United Association has clearly inherited some of that traditional craze, and has set its heart on having a library which shall be all-sufficing to its members for political, national and literary needs. Perhaps it is usual to get possession of some books in the first instance, and then to secure the necessary book-cases. The Association, however, knows better, and the sight of an empty book-case in its rooms has had the electrical effect of inducing some of its members to make gifts of volumes which shall fill their emptiness, and remove the slur of a non-literary aspect. The grateful thanks of the Council have been tendered to Mrs. Raffi for her offer to present this embryo library with a complete set of the works of Raffi, her late husband—the Victor Hugo of Armenian literature. This first gift was promptly followed by another, Mr. P. Tonapetean presenting sixteen volumes of English and Armenian literature bearing on Armenia. The example thus set will, we doubt not, be followed by others, and the magic of erecting empty shelves will have done its work. Such future gifts will be duly notified in these pages. We are informed that a library existed in years gone by, and prior to the eclipse of the Association. Should any old members know of the whereabouts of such books and will divert them to their proper resting place, they will earn the gratitude of the Association.

The Armenian Question.*

By F. R. SCATCHERD.

I.

The average Briton, with the exception of the few interested in missionary enterprise, regards the inhabitants of Asia Minor as mere savages, and holds, with charming impartiality, that Turks, Armenians, and Kurds are all equally at fault, except that the Armenians, being cowards, make the most noise when they are hurt. And the governing classes share this indifference without the justification of ignorance due to lack of leisure and information. No mistake could be more disastrous in its consequences to all concerned.

The Armenians are a civilized people. All through Armenia are found ruined palaces, fortresses, and monasteries, eloquent of vanished glories. They were among the first to adopt Christianity, and their churches date back to the first centuries of the Christian era. Professor Edgar Banks tells us that the new stone library at Etchmiadzin, in Russian Armenia, contains thousands of ancient Armenian manuscripts, and that there are cuneiform inscriptions in the museum twenty-five centuries old. Armenian learning in the fifth century saved to posterity by its translations, early writings, the originals of which were afterwards irretrievably lost.

As to the charge of cowardice, Djemal Bey (who became Vali of Adana after the massacres) speaks in the highest terms of the bravery of the Armenian soldiers under his command during the recent wars, and expresses his belief that the Armenians and Turks together will one day regenerate the Ottoman Empire.

The Kurds are mainly a barbarous people, and are a menace to the Turks no less than to the Armenians. There is no Kurdish nation, no Government, no written language, literature, or schools. The Kurdish movement is limited to a few chiefs, and the Kurds suffer almost as much at the hands of these feudal despots as do their Christian neighbours.

Kurdish villages are groups of hovels, sunk in the ground, lighted by a hole in the roof, and no green thing is found growing in their neighbourhood.

The Armenian villages have churches and schools, and agriculture is generally practised.

Mr. Noel Buxton records the fact that the Turkish Government is often powerless to protect Turks from Kurdish outrage, much less Armenians and other Christians. One can scarcely blame the Turkish Government when one knows something of the Kurds. Take as an example Ismail Aga Simko, who is certainly one of the best and most gifted of the Kurdish chiefs. He hits and splits, at a distance of sixty yards, a cartridge held between the fingers of one of his men; not now and then, but five times out of six. He has political ambitions, talks of the Kurdish movement, and holds that the Kurds will gain their independence within two years. He asserts that any granting of political privileges by the Powers to the Armenians would not be tolerated for one moment by the Kurds. They would instantly massacre all the Armenians.

Last November, in Paris, I met a young infantry Lieutenant of Kurdish origin, belonging to the family of Salaheddine Eyoubi. He is rich, and his family has great influence in Kurdistan. He told me that the Kurds could never admit the Armenians to political, administrative, and judicial equality.

"We can die, mademoiselle," he said, "but we cannot submit to dishonour. Kurdistan is really our country. The Armenians have only taken refuge with us. Lately they have been infected by some young and ambitious Armenians, poisoned with Occidental ideas.

* Reprinted, by kind permission, from *The Asiatic Review*, April, 1914.

The general Armenian public treats us with respect, but occasionally gets incited by these intriguers to make disturbances. Often the trouble is due to Russian Armenian reactionaries, instigated by the Russian Government."

A reference to the daily atrocities perpetrated on defenceless victims elicited this answer:

"These are the crimes noticeable in any country under similar circumstances. *No one notices these things.* Lately they have been chronicled by Armenian Committees. As for us we only know of an Armenian Question through European newspapers. And autonomy in Armenia is impossible. The *amour propre* of Kurds and Muhammadans would never suffer them to sink to the level of their humble slaves of yesterday. As I said before, we could not survive dishonour, and we do not dread death."

II.

Albania in Europe, and Armenia in Asia, have hitherto been two of the main centres of unrest in the Ottoman Empire. Both are mountainous countries, but there all resemblance ceases.

Chiefly Muhammadan in religion, Albania was the great stronghold of Abdul Hamid. His bodyguard was always recruited from amongst the Albanians. And yet Albania became the birthplace of the new régime. From thence came the telegram to the Sultan asking him to promulgate the then Constitution, and Abdul Hamid, after a few days' hesitation, acceded to the demand.

"Having given birth to the new Turkey, this wild country plunged her (Turkey) into a disastrous war, which cost Turkey the loss of her European possessions, and finally of Albania herself. And Turkey can now be congratulated on having her hands free from that turbulent country."

This passage from a patriotic Armenian's letter shows the loyalty of the Armenian, despite all he has suffered; and were all Turkish statesmen as far-seeing as the late Kiamil Pasha and Boghos Nubar Pasha, the Armenian Question would soon cease to exist. Kiamil Pasha was keenly alive to the value of the still unquenched patriotism of the much-tried Armenians, and assured me that the carrying out of reforms in Armenia would be his first care on returning to office.

Boghos Pasha (whom I saw after the Peace Conference in London), less idealistic by nature, pointed out that an enlightened self-interest would insure the carrying out of the promised reforms, as the solvency of the Turkish Empire depended to a very great extent upon the prosperity of Armenia. And the Armenians, he said, preferred to remain Ottoman subjects, provided they received security and justice, as their religion and nationality were safer under Turkish rule than they would be if annexed by any other Power.

The short-sightedness of Turkish statesmen (with too few exceptions) is simply astounding, if we take into consideration the geographical position of Armenia, bordering as it does upon Russia, the natural enemy of the Ottoman Empire. The misgovernment of Armenia is proverbial, and the new régime has not improved matters. When each Power had obtained its share of the spoils from Turkey—Germany her railways, Austria and Italy the creation of Albania, France her loans and railway concessions in Northern Anatolia, England her Persian Gulf and Koweit—then Russia put forward her claim to protect poor misgoverned Armenia, and many Armenians driven desperate by continued oppression and massacre, were only too willing to seek refuge from the known horrors of Turkish misrule in the possible security offered by Russian protection.

The scheme of moderate administrative reforms drawn up by the Powers and accepted by Turkey, after much temporizing, provides that the six vilayets inhabited by Armenians, shall be divided into two districts, each to be under the control of an Inspector-General, the Powers having a voice in the election of these two Commissioners.

Vague and inefficient as is this measure of administrative reform, it would satisfy the Armenians if faithfully carried out. They, however, fear that nothing will be done, because European control is not adequately stipulated and guaranteed, and that the usual suicidal astuteness of the Turkish statesmen will enable them to evade even this shadowy control, and so nullify the whole scheme. The weak point lies in the fact that, although of European nationality, the Inspectors will enter the service of Turkey, and will receive instructions from Constantinople, while the Armenians were rightly anxious that they should be held responsible to the Powers, who would exercise direct control over them, through their Ambassadors, at the Sublime Porte.

The Chauvinist Press of Turkey has wrongfully accused the Armenians of Separatist aspirations, and of attempting to introduce foreign intervention by their demand for European control.

The Turks assert their intention to introduce reforms in Armenia, as in other Turkish provinces, independent of foreign control, and are astonished and hurt when the Armenians demand more than mere promises.

The Armenians deny that their claims for reform have any bearing upon Separatism, which they reject *in toto*. They insist only upon reforms that are absolutely vital, and honestly believe that these reforms will not be carried out by Turkey however solemn her promises may be. Painful experience has now taught them that no promises are binding upon the Turkish Government unless they are backed by the Great Powers.

Furthermore, the Armenians maintain that, in demanding European control, they are more patriotic than the Turks who refuse it, since, lacking that control, no appreciable improvement can take place, as the Turks have neither the men nor the means to that end at their

disposal. Thus the country will remain in its present unsatisfactory condition, ripe any moment for Russian annexation—a repetition of the history of Macedonia, which could have been saved by the inauguration of timely reforms.

III.

Just a word in conclusion to those friends of Turkey who desire the preservation of her integrity. There is no salvation for Turkey without reform. Will these reforms be really introduced without pressure from the Powers? Can they be efficiently carried out without European aid? Is not the carrying out of essential reforms, under adequate European control, the only way of avoiding *dangerous* foreign intervention? And will not a reformed and prosperous Turkey be the Turkey that will the soonest become free of the tutelage of Europe?

The Turk rarely learns from the facts of history. Force is the only power to which he bows, and he defers the evil day of reform to the very last. Many months after the establishment of the Constitution, Mr. Charles Woods, author of the "Danger Zone of Europe," asked an Artillery Commander if reforms had been introduced in the artillery, and whether range practices were now carried on. The answer was that the Turkish Artillery had been so good for fifteen years, that it was not necessary to carry out any reforms! And I recall the airy optimism of the Turkish statesman at Constantinople in the spring of 1910, when Dr. Platon Drakoulis, on a semi-official mission, urged the advantages of a Turco-Greek Alliance* as the basis for a Balkan Federation, in view of the danger of a Balkan Alliance which left Turkey outside.

"Let them unite," was his reply. "We shall be more than a match for them all." And that same statesman last month assured me that he was perfectly satisfied with the policy of his party and its results. And he spoke the truth.

In face of such facts, is not Sir Edward Grey premature in assuming that—

"The present Turkish Government have realised how much they have lost in Europe by their bad government, and how essential it is that they should apply in their Asiatic provinces the lessons which have been learned from their reverses in Europe."

What evidence does he offer us that these lessons have been learned?

* When a Turkish statesman shows wisdom it is often late in the day, and when he is out of power. Cherif Pasha writes (*Mecheroutiette*, March, 1914), that in his opinion an understanding ought to have been come to with Greece with regard to Crete before the beginning of external troubles. Where was he in 1910, when such an expression of opinion would have been priceless?



Felicia R. Scatcherd

("FELIX RUDOLPH.")

In this issue we have been privileged to reprint an article on the "Armenian Question," and our readers will appreciate the portrait we give above of the talented writer, whose reputation and influence in the cause of humanity are world-wide. Indeed, she has been styled "the M.P. for Humanity."

Her father, passing from Addiscombe College to India in the military profession, was passionately devoted to the cause of liberty and a friend of Kossuth, Kinkel and Garibaldi. Her mother, a granddaughter of Sir Morgan Crofton, Bart., with her enthusiasm for humanity and a horror of suffering, was a silent power behind many a cause which appealed to her. It is not surprising, therefore, that the subject of our notice should have inherited the striking characteristics of both parents.

Miss Scatcherd's activities in the cause of humanity have been varied. Her work in the Peace movement has brought her the friendship of leading men and women of all nations. Suffering peoples, and Armenians among them, have never appealed to her in vain for help. By her earnest and convincing personality, she has won over Indians, Persians and Arabs; while in Greece her name is a household word as an apostle of Hellenic Renaissance and Unity. Unconscious of class, and acknowledging no distinctions, she counts humanity as her kindred, and her greatest happiness consists in untiring service to its cause. Politics she detests, though forced into it by humanitarian considerations; while her real tastes lie in the direction of philosophy and metaphysics. A recent writer has happily described "Felix Rudolph" as one who has "written her name in ineffaceable letters amongst the most earnest and most daring of all Europeans who have linked themselves to the cause of the minor nationalities of the Eastern world."

Kurdish Raid in Armenia.

In the early days of this month alarming news began to reach Constantinople that the Kurds were attacking in force the districts of Eastern Anatolia, particularly in the direction of Bitlis in Armenia.

The proposed reforms in Armenia undoubtedly threatened the feudal privileges which the Kurdish chiefs exercised to the detriment of Armenians. And it is in resentment against the deprivation of these privileges that some of the chiefs, in the name of the Cheriati, or sacred law of Islam, have hurled their followers against the town of Bitlis.

To those who are acquainted with the inner workings of the lawless bands that infest these districts, the raid was not unexpected. In our last issues, under the heading of "Latest News from Armenia," we quoted some passages of a letter from a well-informed correspondent in Turkey, which threw a somewhat lurid light on the existing state of affairs. Portions of the letter which were of an even more alarming character, we intentionally suppressed, in the hope that, as Turkey seemed anxious to introduce reforms, the possibilities held out would be falsified. As our hopes have not been realised, and our correspondent's information has been amply confirmed by events, we give here a translation of the news communicated to us:—

"We have news from the most trustworthy sources, and it has just been confirmed by reports from the French and Russian consuls, that twenty-three great Kurdish tribes have lately held secret conferences at Bohtan (in Bitlis), at Shemguian (in Van), and at Sonelj-Bulak (in Persia), and have adopted the following resolutions:—

(i) that all Armenians on the Russian frontier should be massacred;

(ii) that Kurdish independence should be proclaimed.

"Money has been forcibly collected both from Kurds and Turks, even from Kurds abroad, in order that an attack on Sassoun should be prepared. . . . They have means of obtaining weapons from the Government, which helps them to suppress the Armenians, and to drive them from their homes.

"Will the Kurds succeed in the objects they are aiming at? On the question of their independence, their success is very doubtful. With regard to their conspiracy against the Armenians, we cannot help thinking that it will succeed, and that Armenia will be anything but the home of the Armenians."

Our correspondent further repeats the statements made by high Ottoman officials, which the Turkish press has not failed to chronicle, that "if the Armenians are making us accept reforms under pressure, they will have to pay for it with 400,000 souls."

Though the news of Kurdish activity has been fully confirmed, it is a satisfaction to feel that Turkish troops appeared promptly on the scene and averted an inevitable massacre of the Christians—a gleam of hope that the Porte at last realises the gravity of the situation in Armenia. In the artillery fire during the fighting a well-known Armenian church, held by the insurgents, was destroyed—one more added to the numberless churches and monasteries which have been reduced to ruins in that unhappy country.

Surely the introduction of the promised reforms, with a proper force at their back to uphold them, should be hurried on—and is it not incumbent on the Powers, in face of this preliminary raid in force, of the knowledge that concerted action by lawless tribes is contemplated, and of the sinister rumours that a portion of the “Young Turk” party are behind the Kurds in this matter of precipitating events, as at Adana, to insist that Turkey should take in hand expeditiously what she has promised and not lapse into slumber again? But the action of the Powers has ever been inexplicable with regard to the Armenian Question.

The most detailed account of the raid is that given by the “Daily Telegraph’s” correspondent at Constantinople, which we subjoin in full:—

GRAVE NEWS FROM ARMENIA.

REVOLT OF THE KURDS.—BITLIS BESIEGED.

ANTI-REFORM REBELLION.

CONSTANTINOPLE, April 3rd (2.30 p.m.).

For the last two days extremely alarming news has been coming from Armenia, particularly from Bitlis; but, before telegraphing anything about the matter, I desired to have my information from a trustworthy source. The results of my investigations are as follows:

About 4,000 armed Kurds are surrounding Bitlis, and some have even taken possession of the Armenian monastery of Khiridrakadar, situated at the extremity of the town, after expelling the monks. The Kurds declared to the monks that their movement was directed not against the Armenians, but against the Government. Two Kurdish Derebeys, Sheik Mollas Selim and Sheik Chehabeddin, stirred up the Kurdish population in the name of the Chariat, and for the last two days a small number of gendarmes and soldiers have been fighting against the Kurds, but the local gendarmerie, of which the majority are Kurds, seem to have gone over to the side of the assailants.

The Minister of the Interior, Talaat Bey, has ordered strong military reinforcements with machine-guns to be despatched immediately from Moosh, Erzindjan, and Erzeroum to suppress the movement, which appears to be general, and extends as far as Moosh, Kighi,

Diarbekir, Van, and Samsun. Although the chiefs have declared that they are not acting against the Armenians, there is reason to fear that if they should succeed in entering Bitlis the Kurds will turn against the Armenian inhabitants, unless military reinforcements should arrive in time.

ARMENIAN FEARS.

The Governor of Bitlis, who seems to be favourable to the Kurdish Derebeys, and whose dismissal has been demanded for a long time by the Patriarchate, has fortunately just resigned, and has been replaced by an energetic functionary.

In Armenian circles the greatest apprehension prevails, because, while hitherto the Kurdish Derebeys have acted individually, they are now working in concert. It is thought in these circles that unless extremely rigorous measures are taken against them, the Kurdish masses will be constantly aroused by them either against the Armenians or against the Government, which ardently desires the prompt application of the reforms. The Kurds, left to themselves, are inoffensive. The reforms are opposed by the Derebeys, who, as the first result of them, would immediately lose their feudal privileges.

The Agence Ottomane, in an official note communicated late last night, mentions this reactionary movement in Armenia, and announces that the Government has already taken military measures with a view promptly to crushing the instigators.

FIGHTING IN THE TOWN.

CONSTANTINOPLE, April 3rd (6.30 p.m.).

The news just received at the Ministry of the Interior from Bitlis is reassuring. The two Derebeys, Selim and Chehabeddin, with their troops, armed with rifles and clubs, succeeded in entering Bitlis, where the garrison and gendarmerie, which had remained loyal, offered a desperate resistance.

Meanwhile strong military reinforcements arrived, and the Kurds were dispersed. There were several casualties on both sides, but no Armenian was wounded or killed. Sheik Selim, who had caused himself to be proclaimed Sultan, under the title of Selim I, managed during the mêlée to take refuge in the Russian Consulate. Chehabeddin has disappeared.

Martial law has been declared in the vilayet of Bitlis, where order will soon be restored, thanks to the reinforcements and the energetic measures taken by the new governor.

The Hamidian Method.

By VICTOR BÉRARD.

Translation of an article in "Pro Armenia" of March 25th, 1914.

It is now four weeks since an understanding was reached in the matter of reforms. For four weeks the best of promises have been held out to the Armenians. Constantinople and St. Petersburg, the Porte, the embassies and the Committee of Union and Progress vie with each other in their optimism. It is said that only two things are required in order to make a start with the reforms, or, at least, to attend to them—two secondary considerations, the staff and the programme.

It is obvious that the preparation of the programme can only follow the selection of the staff. In the first place it is necessary to find the two Inspectors-General, since it has been decided to divide Eastern Anatolia into two spheres of superintendence. In order to render the quest obviously less easy, it was agreed at the start that all officials of the Great Powers, all Frenchmen, Englishmen, Russians, Germans, Italians, etc., should be excluded; it is to the small neutral states that recourse is to be had, and as neither Switzerland, nor Denmark, nor Norway could offer any candidate, applications must be made only to the Belgians and to the Dutch.

It is said that *one* Belgian and *one* Dutchman have been found, who are fit to undertake the position and even to hold it with credit. As it is expressly stipulated in the Turco-Russian agreement that the Powers should submit to the Porte several candidates for each of the two inspectorships, perhaps it would be expedient to discover as soon as possible a few more Belgians and a few more Dutchmen. Otherwise, one can well imagine, indeed, at the outset the revival at Constantinople of the old methods.

* * * * *

"Here are our candidates," will say the embassies to the Porte.

"For two such important posts, we require some twenty candidates," will be the reply of the Porte to the ambassadors.

The ambassadors will make a search for Belgians, whom the Porte will reject; for Dutchmen, whose claims the Porte will dispute. Then the Porte will suggest the names of some Swiss or some Portuguese, who will not be acceptable to the embassies. And this first exchange of views will take from twelve to fifteen months.

"Here are twenty candidates," will at last say their Excellencies the Ambassadors, somewhere about March or May, 1915.

"After the Bairam I will scrutinise them, and will make my choice," will be the reply of the Sublime Porte somewhere about July.

The consideration of the twenty names will take some weeks. After three months, or six months, the nominations, under the vigorous

demands of the ambassadors, will be submitted to the Sultan; we shall then be at the beginning of 1916. The nominations will be ratified by the Sultan some six months later. Then the first half of the transaction will have been brought to a conclusion.

The second half will follow: what is to be the programme of operations? They will set about with all earnestness to prepare this programme. It will be with the utmost difficulty that they will make six or eight months suffice, if they are to bring to a proper adjustment the claims of the Armenians with the wishes and the oppositions of the Turks. However, if they begin to discuss these matters by July, 1916, the result would certainly not be reached till January, 1917. Let us put down yet another six months for enacting the regulations, for recruiting the subordinate staff, finding the money, forecasting the revenue and the expenditure, and finally placing the machinery in operation; in July, 1917, the Armenians will begin to see the dawn of the new era.

Then let us give rein to our optimism! And what is more, let us be patient! The comedy is just beginning; we have been three years, perhaps four unless a sudden storm, from the direction of the Caucasus, extinguishes the lights, and overthrows what still remains of that theatre of Diplomatic Follies which is styled the Ottoman Empire.

* * * * *

I have always counselled the Armenian nation to display the utmost loyalty towards the Porte. A sincere understanding between Turks and Armenians is not only a necessity, but it is the best solution of the difficulty. I have never indulged in dreams of autonomy, in preferential claims, or in independence. But I see more clearly than ever the approach of the dangerous moment, when the shufflings and the trickery of the Porte, coupled with the complacency of certain of the embassies, will bring about again in Armenia a renewal of the scenes of 1896 and of 1909. It is reforms that have been promised; but it is massacre that will rear its head again.

The reforms would have had a chance of having some result if the Inspectors had been appointed within a fortnight; if they had entered on their duties in a month; if in three months they had at their disposal the funds and the staff; and if only the winter had been ushered over a pacified Armenia.

It would be doing a disservice both to the Turks and to the Armenians to conceal from them the truth regarding the present and the future. Let us be optimists! Let us celebrate with fitting joy the announcement of the reforms and the great reconciliation between the Porte and the Patriarchate. But let us not forget that the embraces at Constantinople, in August, 1908, were followed, eight months afterwards, by consequences of moment, the tragedy of Adana.

“From London to Armenia,”

By ARAM RAFFI.

(Continued from p. 296.)

V.

AZERBEJAN.

*Azerbaijan — Tabriz — Salmast — Oriental versus Western Wares—
Germanised Persian Carpets—The Russians in Persia—Modes of
Travelling—Caravans, Ancient and Modern—Camels and Horses—
Urmi—Bathing in Lake Urmi.*

In ancient times, Azerbaijan constituted the south-eastern part of Armenia. According to Greek historians, it embraced Armenian Persia, and the province of *Faitakaran* (the present Ghradagh) as well as part of *Vasपुरakan* (the present Vilayet of Van). This province was called “Azerbaijan” even in the time of Darius VI. From the time of the Armenian King, Vagharshak, to the time of Artavazt I, it was under the dominion of Armenia. It consists generally of lofty mountain ranges, intersected by deep, rugged ravines, occasionally opening upon plateaux.

Tabriz is the capital of Azerbaijan, the residence of the *Valiyahd* (Crown Prince), European Consuls, and the seat of an Armenian bishop, under whose control are all the ecclesiastical and national affairs of the province. He has representatives in Salmast, Urmi, and Khoi.

At present there is a movement among Armenians for the furtherance of educational work among the Armenians of Persia. There is a great need of Armenian schools in these parts. In some districts, *e.g.*, in Maragha, the schools are of a very inferior order.

When the national resources of the country are developed, when a railway is constructed and when there are permanent peace, order and serenity in the land, Armenians will, no doubt, play a great rôle in those parts.

I omit all mention of the Armenians of Southern Persia, which we did not visit, and which belongs to a different sphere of influence, *viz.* : that of the English, and where the conditions differ from those of Azerbaijan.

Salmast (the historical *Zarehavan*), is rich in natural beauty, and there is scarcely an acre of its surface that is not under cultivation. The soil is very fertile; thanks to abundant irrigation, it is covered with cornfields, plantations of trees, orchards, etc. The climate is mild. The most beautiful season of the year is the spring; the winter is not severe, and the four seasons are equal in

duration. The river Zola plays the same part in Salmast as the Nile in Egypt. It rises in the outskirts of the mountains, pursues a winding easterly course through the province of Salmast, and, with its tributaries, irrigates the whole country before falling ultimately into Lake Urmi. There are other—smaller—rivers rising in the same mountains which also help in the irrigation of the country. There are also several springs which supply good drinking water, besides mineral and thermal springs, used for medicinal purposes. One of the springs in Derek, after flowing in an exiguous stream for a short distance, dries up, leaving behind the minerals it held in solution, out of which a marble mountain has been formed. There are many other springs of similar character on the borders of Salmast. The water of these springs beats up and down, finding no means of escape, for the most part; but in a few cases, it gains a narrow outlet and petrifies into white stones. The people of Salmast quarry these stones and boil them, thus producing excellent whitewash, etc.

Salmast consists of about sixty villages. The majority of the inhabitants are Armenians.

The villages of *Fayatjuk* (the birthplace of Raffi), *Haftvan*, *Ghalasar*, *Mahlam*, *Sarna* and *Drishk* are the most prosperous and are inhabited entirely by Armenians.

The beauty of these villages is enhanced by the gardens, orchards and woods by which they are surrounded. In the spring everything appears of a radiant green. The streets of these villages are wide; and rivulets, overhung by trees, run through them on both sides. The villages inhabited by Mussulmans are less clean and are unattractive in aspect.

Salmast also exports nuts and dried fruits, such as almonds and raisins.

In Salmast, as in all parts of Azerbaijan, lands fall into three classes, as regards tenure. The first class consists of lands belonging to the Crown. The second consists of lands belonging to *Aghas*. The Agha lets out his lands to peasants, who cultivate it, giving half or one-third of the profits to the Agha. To the third class belong villages which are also under Aghas, but in which the peasants are the land-owners and only pay one-eighth or one-ninth of the profits, as a tax, to the Agha. Every peasant has the right to sell his land when he chooses. Of course the peasants also pay crown taxes. Notwithstanding the fertility and natural wealth of the place, this unsatisfactory Land System and the oppression of the rulers keep the country poor and drive the people to emigration.

It is difficult to collect statistics relating to the population of these parts; sometimes the figures given are misleading, *e.g.*, it is said that in Haftvan there are 300 families, and in Fayatjuk 240, but, to gain exact information, we must bear in mind the number of a family. An average family consists of 20 to 30 members. Mother, father, grandfather, sons, with their wives, and grandchildren all live together.

Up to the end of the first quarter of the 19th century, the number of Armenians settled there was great; for, after the last Russo-Persian campaign (1827) there was an extensive emigration of Armenians from Azerbejan into Russia. This war terminated in a treaty between Russia and Persia, signed in 1828, and containing these two conditions:

- (1) That the territory extending as far as the Araxes should belong to Russia.
- (2) *That no obstacles should be raised by the Persian Government to the departure of any Armenians who might be desirous of emigrating to Russia.*

The effect of the latter stipulation was the migration of 40,000 Armenians from Azerbejan into Russia, where they settled on the other side of the Araxes in Hin-Nakhchivan and its neighbourhood (the population of which consists entirely of immigrant Armenians), and also in the whole district of Erivan. Since then there has been some emigration of Armenians into Russia, but in small numbers. Although the population of Salmast has been thus reduced, it has been on the other hand, augmented by the emigrations of persecuted Armenians from Turkish Armenia. Two of these emigrations were of considerable importance. The first of these took place after the last Russo-Turkish War, when the vilayet of Van was the scene of various massacres, outrages and plunderings, committed by the Kurds. At that time thousands of suffering Armenians, from the district of Aghbak, on the frontier, left their native land and escaped to Salmast. The second great emigration was in 1896-7, during the notorious massacres. At that time the fugitives amounted to 3,000. Salmast is an open door for refugees from Turkey, mostly from the district of Aghbak. Emigrations are also caused by famines.

At one time the people of Salmast were very prosperous. It is very instructive to trace the history of the rise and fall of an industry in these regions, as such a history furnishes an illustration of the way in which the East gives way before the West.

The chief industry of Salmast, especially of Fayatjuk and Haftvan, used to be the spinning of cotton into calico, which was dyed crimson or blue. The dyes were extracted from plants indigenous to the country, so the tints were peculiar. The crimson calico was used for women's dress, the blue for men's. Almost everyone in these villages had dyeing works of his own, and poverty was unknown. These cottons were exported to the further parts of Persia and also to the Caucasus. This state of things continued till 1895, when fabrics of European manufacture were introduced. These being of more attractive appearance than those of home production, though less serviceable, ousted the latter, and the industry came to an end.

A similar sequence of events is now taking place in Persia. It is well known that the manufacture of carpets is the main industry of that country; but now enterprising German companies are trying to take that industry out of the hands of the Persians. They have already started in Tabriz factories for making woollen yarn for carpets. They have also special workshops where the carpets are woven under their direction. Even the designs and the style of work are not left to the native but are rapidly changing their character under the foreign influence, and we shall soon have Germanized Persian carpets. This interference is, from an artistic point of view, a great detriment, for the imitation Persian carpets manufactured in America, Ireland and other places have been found very inferior to those made in Persia. This interference with native art has shown itself, with disastrous effects, in other places. Genuine Armenian embroideries are a work of art, but, in order to make them marketable, some charitably inclined foreigners have persuaded the embroideresses to make various changes in colour and style which entirely destroy the distinctive originality of the work.

In leather, boots, woollen goods, wearing apparel, earthenware, glass, and some other articles, the Germans have no rivals in the market, and all this is going on in Tabriz, which is so close to Russia and where there are several thousands of Russians to only thirty or forty Germans.

Russia is not indifferent to this state of things. The Russian Government had decided to discontinue the Parcel Post Service from Julfa to Tabriz and from Ashkabad to Meshed; this led to a protest from the German Government. It was pointed out by the latter that the Russian Parcel Post into Persia was not affected, and it was held that the restriction represented a deliberate attempt, on the part of Russia, in the interest of her trade, to exclude from Persian districts, served best by these routes, German and other non-Russian goods, which pass through Russia by Parcel Post. To avoid complications, Russia has postponed the enforcement of her decision, but is keeping a watchful eye on the German movements in Persia, and is at the same time taking pains to encourage Russian trade in that country.

The Salmast seat of Government is Diliman, where all the Government officials reside and where are also the Post and Telegraph Offices, the prison, the customs-house, and the market. This is also the Russian headquarters.

On the heights of the Turco-Persian frontier live several tribes of Nomadic Kurds, who used to come down in the spring and autumn, and make raids on the inhabitants of the lowlands. This was done even in broad daylight. It was not safe to keep cattle, as they were liable to be taken by the Kurds. But now the presence of Russian troops has greatly lessened this evil.

The number of Russian troops in Northern Persia is now stated to be 14,800. Six months ago the strength of the force was officially stated to be 17,400. For some time past the Russian troops have been discontented with the very scant housing accommodation provided for them, more especially in the matter of winter quarters, and this, it is understood, was the cause of the reduction of the garrisons by nearly 3,000 men.

Very considerable progress is being effected in the province of Azerbejan, owing to the presence in force of Russian troops. Doubtless in many respects Russia is deserving well of the people. The gift of law and order is to them a blessing of a nature hitherto undreamt of, and if that factor alone had to be considered, the military occupation of Persian soil might indeed be justified. But the forcible occupation of a province of a sovereign, independent and friendly country by an invader of alien race and language is a matter which must be adjudged on wider grounds, and the only possible justification is that Russia has proclaimed her occupation to be of a temporary nature and as meant to meet the immediate necessities arising from the disorderly state of a frontier adjoining her own borders.

From Diliman we hired horses for our journey to Van, and this mode of travelling indicates how we were gradually drifting away from civilisation. We began our trip on the N. Express in comfortable sleeping cars; then came Russian trains, with long stops at the stations, then motor cars, followed by horse-carriages; now the only possible mode of travelling was on horseback. Before our sight stretched long caravans of camels, with bells hung round their necks, by means of which they produce the mournful, monotonous music of the desert. This sound is most welcome to some who have either lost their way or are dying of thirst or hunger, or whom the assassin's dagger is threatening. Caravans are diminishing in size as the country grows more civilised and secure. When Ludovico Verthema was travelling from Damascus to Mecca and Medina (1503), he joined a caravan consisting of 40,000 men, with 35,000 camels and a guard of 60 Mamelukes. On their way they had an encounter with Arabs, arising out of a dispute about water. The caravan had found a spring at the foot of a hill where they encamped. The Arabs demanded pay for the water that had been drawn. A fight lasting three days ensued, in which the Arabs were routed with a loss of 1,500 men.

When one travels in Persia, one hears a great deal about the Shasevans, who reside round about Ardavel and are renowned for their bravery.

Next to Tabriz *Urmi* is the most important town of Azerbejan. It is the seat of several Missions, with schools and colleges attached to them. The natural wealth of the country is also making *Urmi* a commercial centre, raisins being its chief export. No doubt this town has a great future before it.

In all Persia there is only one large lake, viz. : *Lake Urmi*, known in Armenian history as *Kaputan*. This lake is almost in the centre of Azerbejan, and is surrounded by the towns and villages which I have mentioned. In ancient times it was larger, but year by year its waters have diminished, its banks have extended further, and out of the waters have emerged new hills and mountains. There are several islands in this lake, some of which are covered with dense forests. On one of these islands are the ruins of a historical fortress, containing some cuneiform inscriptions which are attributed to Semiramis. Salt is found in *Lake Urmi*. The water is rather shallow, and this is perhaps the reason that the lake is not navigated by large vessels. Small sailing vessels pass through it, generally laden with timber, for the neighbourhood of *Urmi* is well wooded.

On certain parts of the shores of the lake are bathing-places. Bathing in this lake is considered healthy and is especially beneficial to rheumatism and similar diseases. The water is impregnated with sulphur and other mineral substances. Sufferers from rheumatism also daub damp mud on their legs and let it dry in the sun. When bathers come out of the water their bodies are covered with salt, which they wash off in the nearest fresh water spring.

There is a special holiday (August 3) when all the people of the neighbourhood go and bathe in *Lake Urmi*.

When a child, I bathed in the lake on that day. Perhaps it was owing to the memory of that event that, when the Lake came in view, I felt a strong impulse to bathe in it.

We put up for the night a short way from it, yet the clear atmosphere of that region makes one's idea of distance so misleading that the lake seemed almost within hand's reach.

During the evening, I expressed my desire to my companions. It was welcomed by the rev. gentleman, himself a great swimmer, who expressed a wish to join me, but the politician was doubtful. First of all, he said, the lake was not so near as we imagined; our muleteers' idea was very vague, one said four hours' journey, another two hours, and the third half-an-hour. We agreed with the last estimate, the politician with the first. Then there was the question of avoiding delay in setting off next morning. We said that we would get up early, go and bathe, and return in time for starting.

There is an Arabic proverb that says: "You do not know a man until you have travelled with him." I should add to this proverb—"in primitive places." It was only under these circumstances that the "*Admirable Crichton*" revealed himself. One's tastes and ideas show themselves more clearly when on a journey than in any other circumstances; and it was under these conditions that I got to know my fellow-travellers. Hitherto I had admired them for their public work, but now I learnt to respect them for their personality, for, during our whole journey, there was never a note of discord, and this incident is a good illustration of this fact. There was a spirit of "give and take" when our individual tastes manifested themselves.

Returning to our story, the politician was resourceful. He proposed that we should start early in the morning, at the hour previously fixed, but that the muleteers should be instructed to drive by the lake, so that we might all have a bathe, and in the morning the carriages drove as near the lake as they could, but the way to the shore was impeded by sand and shrubs so we had to walk down, leaving the carriages behind.

The lake had seemed a mere hand's breadth off, but we walked until we lost sight of our carriages, and then the tents of some nomadic tribe became visible. We had been previously warned by our muleteers to keep away from these tents, as they were the dwellings of dangerous people.

We now saw a girl from one of the tents approaching us. She had something in her hand that glittered in the sunlight and looked like a dagger. As she was seen more plainly, we perceived that it was a large knife, used for cutting shrubs. When she caught sight of us, she turned back. Apparently our fears were mutual.

The nearer we came to the lake, the more difficult was the way, for the sand became softer and our feet sank in it. Plantations were now replaced by seaweed, and there was an odour of sulphur in the air. To reach the water we should have had to pass through a great stretch of mud. There was every probability that, if we advanced, we should sink into the mud, and perish, without witness, on these forlorn shores, so we had to give up our plan of bathing in *Lake Urmi*. It was not till afterwards that we learnt of the existence of proper bathing-places on certain parts of the shore.

When we turned back and looked for our carriages, we found we had entirely lost sight of them. On the far horizon we saw three black points which we took for them, but, as we advanced nearer, we discovered that they were three peaks of the hill. We were afraid that, owing to our delay, our muleteers had driven in search of us and so we had lost each other. We decided to separate and go in three different directions, shouting at the top of our voices, but there was no response. Finally, we caught sight of the carriages, but, before resuming the journey we immortalised the incident by being photographed on the beach.

(To be continued.)

Armenian Ladies' Guild of London.

It is a pleasant task to refer again to the Ladies' Guild, which has worked strenuously since last November making garments for orphan children in Armenia. In the "Current Notes" of our November issue we drew attention to the formation of this Guild, which we predicted would become a useful adjunct of the Armenian United Association of London; and our remarks have been more than justified by the results attained.

Starting work in November last, the ladies of the Guild have met regularly every fortnight, with a break at Christmas, for three hours' solid work, the numbers present at these meetings varying from 25 to 40 at times. On March 30th there took place the last meeting of the season, when an interesting report, embodying the work done and the state of the finances, was submitted to the members by the Guild Committee.

The actual number of suitable warm garments made for children in Armenia was 156. The total sum collected for the work was £43 7s. 6d., of which £6 2s. 6d. was contributed by English sympathisers. With that commendable economy and foresight which are the characteristics of ladies versed in household management, the Committee have been able to put aside in a bank the sum of £21 2s. 6d. out of the sum collected, so as to form the nucleus of a fund and also to enable the members to make an early start in their operations next October. Since the Committee's report was submitted, a windfall of over £29, collected by Armenian ladies in the Dutch settlement of Java, has been received, bringing the available balance for next year to a sum exceeding £50.

To those who have been privileged to watch the work of the ladies at their meetings, it is evident that, apart from the good work being done for helpless children in Armenia, the gatherings have decidedly assisted in bringing into closer touch the scattered units of the Armenian colony in London through that subtle power which we designate as feminine influence, and in fostering the feeling of harmony and unity which cannot but be an asset to the national cause. That the influence has been far-reaching is evidenced by the spontaneous gift referred to above of sympathising sisters from so distant a colony as Java; nor can we doubt that as the Guild becomes more widely known, its influence and its power for good, in a sphere that is distinctly woman's, will expand in proportion.

We must not omit to mention the kindly aid given to the Guild both in money and, what is of even greater intrinsic worth, in friendly co-operation by those English ladies who have joined in the gatherings as if they were one in heart and soul with the Armenian colony. It is by such mutual and intimate intercourse, and especially on the part of their womenkind, that the two nations can get to know each other better, and we feel sure that the Guild is doing, in this respect, a work of the first importance which merits due appreciation.

The General Council of the Armenian United Association of London has undertaken to ensure that the output of the Guild is transmitted to the proper destination for distribution among the villages in Armenia, where material assistance of the kind is needed. For this purpose the co-operation of the Associations in Constantinople and Cairo has been sought.

In conclusion, though it would be invidious to mention names where all have worked with a will, it is right to congratulate the Committee of the Guild, consisting of Mrs. Gudenian, the President, Miss Pauline Aganoor, the Hon. Secretary, Miss L. John, the Hon. Treasurer, and the two members, Mrs. Mosditchian and Mrs. A. P. Hacobian, on whom has fallen the brunt of the labour, for making so conspicuous a success of the Guild.

The Armenian United Association "At Home,"

To Celebrate the Armenian Easter,

*Held at the Elysée Hall, Queen's Road, W., on Sunday,
April 19th, 1914.*

PROGRAMME

President's Address.

VIOLIN SOLOS	(a) Aria	<i>Gluck-Pecskai</i>
	(b) Hungarian Dance—G minor	<i>Brahms-Joachim</i>
	MR. S. G. GALSTAUN.	
SONG Aria ("Carmen")..	<i>Bizet</i>
	MISS JOHANNA FERINA.	
ADDRESS "As Others see Us" ..	
	MR. MIHRAN BALIAN.	
VIOLIN SOLO Caprice Viennois ..	<i>Kreisler</i>
	MR. S. G. GALSTAUN.	
SONGS	.. (a) "Als die Alte Mutter"	<i>Dvorak</i>
	(b) "Ouvre tes yeux bleux"	<i>Massenet</i>
	MISS JOHANNA FERINA.	

ARMENIAN EASTER CHANTS—

- (a) "Kristos Hariav" (Christ is Risen).
- (b) "Kovia Yerusaghem" (Glorify the Lord, O Jerusalem).
- (c) "Hair Mer" (The Lord's Prayer).

MR. SIMPAD KESSADJIAN AND ARMENIAN CHOIR.

In the absence of an Armenian church in London, it has become customary for the Association to celebrate the more important festivals of the year in a more or less secular fashion. Easter Sunday was thus celebrated, the President's address touching lightly on this great festival of Christendom, both in the East and the West, and how it has a special bearing just now on Armenia. The music was exquisitely rendered, the sweet singing of Miss Johanna Ferina calling forth enthusiastic applause and encores. The masterly violin solos of Mr. Galstaun, who was skilfully and feelingly accompanied by Miss David, were also an important feature of the programme. A novel feature for the English visitors, of whom a considerable number were present, were the Armenian Easter chants, well rendered by a small Armenian choir.

Mr. M. Balian gave an outspoken address on our attitude towards the British nation; and, as time permitted towards the end, an opportunity was given to Prof. G. Thoumaian to say a few farewell words before his departure for Constantinople to take up his duties of Deputy in the Turkish Parliament. The gathering was also briefly addressed by Prof. G. Hagopian and Miss Felicia Scatcherd.

PRESIDENT'S address:—Our Association is the only means of gathering together in this wilderness of London the scattered units of our colony, and, as we have no church here, it is right that we should not forget the special festivals which our Church would enjoin, did one exist. It is to celebrate our Easter Sunday, therefore, that we are here this afternoon. The churches of this country celebrated their Easter last Sunday, but as in the matter of Christmas, which I pointed out to you three months ago, so with the festival of Easter, the Churches of the East and of the West have different methods of calculation, and this movable festival rarely falls on the same Sunday for the two branches of Christendom.

Even in the Eastern Churches there is some deviation, though a slight one, between the Greek Church and the Armenian Church. Their computation for Easter is identically the same, with the sole difference that owing to the Alexandrine calendar being used by the Armenians and the Byzantine calendar by the Greeks, four times in every cycle of 532 years Easter occurs with a week's interval in these two Churches. This difference was always the cause of strife between the Greeks and the Armenians in past centuries, especially at Jerusalem. But we need not trouble ourselves about these strifes—the last time the interval occurred was in 1824, and then there was a close bond of friendship between the Russian Government and Etchmiadzin, and the two Churches fraternised, and the Armenians waived their right to their own date, and agreed to keep the festival on April 6th, which was the date for the Greek Church. The next deviation will occur in the year 2071. So far as we are concerned, therefore, we can sleep comfortably in our beds, and trust that our great-grand-children will

have imbibed sufficient wisdom not to quarrel over such trifles as dates—indeed, let us hope that the world will have grown so much older by that time as to see the wisdom of changing this movable feast into a fixed festival on one particular Sunday in each year for the whole of Christendom. . . .

Now Easter is the greatest festival of Christendom, and it has been aptly fixed for the spring months as heralding a new life, and emphasising deliverance from old shackles. The Jewish Passover, coinciding with the Christian Easter, commemorated the happy deliverance from the persecutions of Egypt. The English name Easter can be traced to an ancient Teutonic goddess, who was the patroness of light and spring. The Armenian word *Zadig* probably also refers to a pagan festival, more remote than the Christian era, and with a similar meaning; the word *azad*, from which it is derived, meaning freedom or deliverance. This old festival heralded the advent of spring, and commemorated deliverance from the rigours of winter in the mountainous districts of Armenia, hence its suitable adaptation to the Eastertide of Christianity.

Here, then, is our greatest festival, the festival of the springing of a new life, of freedom from old bondage. In speaking to you last year on the same occasion, I said that we should hail that Easter day as of good omen, for in the settlement of the questions of the Near East, then pending, Armenia had unbounded confidence that her trials would not be forgotten. I said, too, that in uttering our customary and devout salutation on future Easter mornings—the salutation of “Christ is risen”—we should be able to add that our country and its prospects had indeed also risen to a new life, that there was to come about a regeneration from the graves of her countless martyrs, and a blossoming of liberty and peace, which were the true birthrights of mankind in general. My words of a year ago may not seem to you now to have been fully realised. But the wrongs of centuries cannot be righted in a day, or in a year; and I can say with confidence that our Cause, which to many of us may have seemed as dead, is already beginning to throw out new shoots, and to show signs of new life. A great step has been taken, and we are on the eve of getting reforms. Therefore, let us not think that our Cause is dead, but on this Easter day let us go back to that first Easter morning, and strengthen our thoughts with that certainty of victory which shines resplendent in every honest human effort. No, our Cause is not dead, but out of the seeming wreck and ashes will rise again a re-vivified Armenia. That is not only our hope and our prayer, but a certainty, and we should work for that certainty with joy in our hearts that the priceless expenditure of the blood of martyrs is now at last going to produce something finer than ever has been—that Armenia, steadfast to her past traditions and clinging to that faith which she was one of the first of nations to espouse, is not only going to get back her own—her lands and her children—but in the peaceful serenity of a settled life, she is going to become the civilising agent, the illuminating beacon, a

St. Gregory himself personified, to those surrounding nations who, in the depths of their ignorance, have sealed her tomb, so to say, with a mighty great stone. It is the Resurrection day, and that mighty stone is surely and gradually being rolled away, to bring to view an empty sepulchre. It is for all of us, for you and for me, to see to it that that sepulchre shall always remain empty, and that the spirit of Armenia, risen to her ideals of sixteen centuries ago, shall permeate the nation anew as the civilising agency destined to bring within the circle of law and order those forces of discord and disaster which have for so long played havoc with our fatherland.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is usual for me to refer to any occurrences of national interest since our last meeting. There is one that I should not omit to mention. From our midst will soon depart a well-known figure, to take up duties of paramount importance to our nation. Prof. G. Thoumaian has been elected, as you know, as Deputy for Cæsarea in the Turkish Parliament, as a representative of the Armenians, and will soon leave these shores for Constantinople. It is not a soft job that has fallen to his lot, but we know him so well that we have absolute confidence that his past knowledge and experience and his consummate tact will stand our nation in good stead. We wish him God-speed, and also a speedy return to us. He is here to-day, and I hope we shall be able to spare him just a little time at the end to say a few parting words to us.

Mr. M. BALIAN said:—Before I deal with my main theme, I feel it desirable to endeavour to remove a certain amount of misapprehension, and resentment, which appears to have arisen owing to some of the remarks made by me when I last had the privilege of addressing you. It will be within the recollection of those then present, that I attributed as one of the main reasons for the failure of our cause to the want of unity and cohesion among us, and the destructive spirit which has, unfortunately, almost invariably impeded, if not frustrated, concerted action on our part. If what I then stated has pricked the conscience of any of you, I am right glad. If it has given rise to enmity towards me, whilst regretting its appearance, I will meet that enmity with amity. I would, however, point out that this Association of ours is not a mutual admiration society. If its members are not to be at liberty to point out the weak spots in our armour, it is manifestly obvious we shall never, successfully, meet our opponents. We must not allow anything, still less petty differences, to influence, prejudice, or in any way affect, our unity in carrying out the main objects we have in view—the objects for which our Association has been founded.

Now, with your leave, I will call your attention to a matter which I think deserves consideration. Those who know us best have given us credit for a good deal of common sense, shrewdness and intelligence. You can, therefore, judge the degree of my surprise when I find some of you doing your best to forfeit this good opinion. Before I indicate precisely what it is to which I take exception, it is necessary that you should clearly know and appreciate the extent to which I consider the British Government responsible and under an obligation

to protect and defend us. For this purpose I am content to rely upon one, single, solitary, incident in recent history to establish and show the great responsibility assumed by the British Government on our behalf. At the close of the last Russo-Turkish War the Russian troops were in occupation of the Armenian Vilayet of Erzeroum. Further, Russia had compelled Turkey to accept the condition that the oft-promised Armenian Reforms were to be put into actual and immediate operation. It has been alleged that in adopting this course Russia had ulterior motives; that there was an *arrière pensée*. It may or may not be so. That does not affect my argument. What cannot be disputed is the positive and incontrovertible fact that Russian troops were there ready to uphold our rights—the rights of every human being—to live in security and peace. Observe what followed. The British Government intervened and compelled Russia to withdraw her troops before completing her self-imposed task. Now, can any right-thinking man or woman consider this episode and but feel the grave and overwhelming moral responsibility assumed by the British Government. Time forbids my explaining in detail the reasons which influenced the British Government, a Christian Power, to take this course of action. It must suffice when I say that British policy and interests in the East could not tolerate for one moment, with equanimity, the presence of Russian troops in the Armenian vilayet. But, I firmly believe, that British Ministers thought and felt that they would be able to put the Armenian Reforms into execution in a different manner. Their subsequent efforts tend to prove this. I will recall but one instance. At the Lord Mayor's Banquet of 1895 the late Lord Salisbury warned the Sultan that if he did not cease persecuting the Armenians, measures would be adopted to compel him to do so. This warning was directed to the then Sultan Abdul Hamid. Whatever else he may have been, Abdul Hamid was a consummate politician and diplomat. He gauged the political situation in Europe much better than did Lord Salisbury. What was his reply to this warning? Massacre upon massacre, one under the very eyes of the representatives of the Great Powers in Constantinople itself! It was then, and apparently not until then, that British Ministers realised that they dare not press for coercive measures. Then they realised that if they did so, owing to the distrust and jealousy prevalent amongst the Great Powers, it might lead to a European conflagration, the ultimate result of which no man could foresee. Armenian though I am, I have sufficiently the courage of my opinions to assert in the most uncompromising way that British Ministers would have been wanting in their duty to their nationals had they hazarded the integrity of the British Empire in an undertaking evidently fraught with such grave peril. The disruption of the British Empire would be a world-wide calamity. We Armenians would probably suffer more than most people by such a catastrophe. We Armenians must recognise and appreciate the grave and insurmountable difficulties which have beset British diplomacy. Judging from the insistent and needlessly outspoken language I have heard, it is evident some of you overlook and underrate these difficulties.

I appeal to you, whether in public or whether in private, when you are calling upon the people of this great country to fulfil their obligations to us, do so with tact and moderation. Be circumspect and reasonable in order that you may not alienate their good will towards us, nor affect their views with regard to our shrewdness and intelligence.

Prof. G. THOUMAIAN said:—In my younger days I chose the motto, "Follow Duty's Call," and I have a clear conscience that to the best of my knowledge I have been faithful to that resolve. The position that is now opening before me is a responsible and delicate one, and in facing it with confidence in God, I must rely on the tolerance and the patience of my fellow-countrymen. It may be that I am expected, on reaching Constantinople, to at once call upon the Sultan, and demand forthwith that he should proceed to Armenia and put down the disorders rampant there, and promptly restore peace and happiness in those provinces. I have the courage to do even this, if I could in the least degree feel hopeful of deriving any benefit for my country. However, I am convinced our hopes lie entirely upon making our demands in such a way to the Turks, with whom and under whom we must live, that they may appreciate our sincerity and freely grant them. We must convince them that by so doing they will be serving their own cause as well; and that what we are asking for is but elementary justice, that is, to be placed upon the same footing as themselves. The era for cheap patriotism is passed—now is the time for action. The peasants in the remotest parts of the country have heard of freedom, and there is an awakening. Schools and education are demanded everywhere—it is for you, their more fortunate brethren, to help them to the best of your ability. In departing to my work I bid you farewell.

Announcements.

THE ARMENIAN UNITED ASSOCIATION OF LONDON.

Conversaciones will be held at the Elysée Hall, Queen's Road, Bayswater, W., on the following dates:—

Sunday, May 24th.

July 12th.

During August and September there will be no social gatherings.

NATIONAL FUND OF HIS HOLINESS THE CATHOLICOS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF ARMENIAN EDUCATION.

We are pleased to acknowledge receipt of the sum of 5 dollars for this fund from Mr. W. Edgar Enman, of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada.

We would inform our readers that the branch of this Fund in the hands of The Armenian United Association of London will remain open until the end of July, when the total amount collected will be forwarded to the proper destination.

Literary Section.

We have been favoured with the following poem from the pen of our contributor, whose powerful lines on "The Spirit of Armenia," which appeared in our December issue, must be fresh in the minds of our readers.

SONG OF THE ARMENIANS.

The Kurdish hawk comes swooping down :
His trail is blood and smoke.
Our herds, our homes, our all are gone ;
We can but wait the stroke,
And thank him if he spare our lives,
Our helpless children, and our wives.

The dungeon yawns beneath our feet,
A foul and noisome den ;
The charnel-house were sweet to it,
Or fever-breeding fen,—
Land too well known ! though from that bourne
The traveller may not oft return.

Our fairest maids are snatched away
To grace the harem, where
The Muslim Pasha pens his prey
In safe secluded lair,—
Poor exiled slaves in poisoned clime,
Whose beauty was their only crime !

Our blood is on a thousand hills ;
Our bones lie bleached and dry
Beside a thousand valley-rills
Beneath a smiling sky ;
And broken roof and blackened wall
Bear silent witness to our thrall.

Ye cities where our fathers dwelt,
Ye fields and hills they trod,
Ye shrines and temples where they knelt
To praise a guardian God !—
Alas ! What boots it now to pray ?
For Allah is the God to-day.

We would not leave these long-loved scenes,
Though all their joy is gone,
And Anarchy amongst us gleans
The harvest Murder won :
Though Kurds yet ravage, Turks enslave,
Our ashes are our tyrants' grave !

We know no Gaiour will hear our call ;
We know our cries are vain ;
We know our bitterest tears may fall
Unheeded as the rain
That beats amid the tempest's roar
Upon some wild untrodden shore.

God of our fathers, in whose breath
The spheres are whirling motes,
Now, while this atom quivereth,
Behold it as it floats !
Behold ! for even in this grain
Are depths of unimagined pain.

Lord of more stars than we can see,
How can we hope Thine eye
Should light upon our misery ?
Yet, God of Mercy ! Why,
When at Thy whisper all were well,
May tyrants make this world a hell ?

G. M. GREEN.

The Armenian United Association of London.

FOUNDED 1898. RECONSTRUCTED 1913.

General Council:

G. M. GREGORY, Lieut.-Col., V.D., *President.*

Madame RAFFI, }
J. G. JOAKIM, } *Vice-Presidents.*

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H. N. MOSDITCHIAN.

M. K. GUDENIAN, M.D., *Hon. Sec.*

S. P. STEPHENS.

This Association has been founded with the double object of (1) drawing together all Armenians in the British capital, bringing them into touch with the British public, and thus establishing a closer sympathy between the two nations; and (2) focussing in the centre of the civilised world the many questions, both social and national, which affect Armenia and the Armenians.

With the above objects in view, the Association is directing its energies to—

- (1) The establishment of a permanent habitation in London, which will embrace a hall for meetings, a reading-room and a library.
- (2) The organisation of social and literary gatherings.
- (3) The relief and education of Armenian orphans rendered destitute through chronic misrule in Armenia.
- (4) Watching the trend of political affairs affecting Armenia, and doing the utmost by pacific means towards the amelioration of the country and the people through (a) a Standing Committee, and by (b) the publication of literature.
- (5) The gradual raising of a fund for the establishment of an Armenian Church in London.

Membership is open to Armenians of both sexes.

Subscription:—Annual, 10/-; entrance fee, 5/-. Life Members, 5 guineas.

Sympathisers and friends of other nationalities are eligible for election as Hon. Members, but they have no voice in the management, and pay no subscriptions.

It will be evident that the above nominal subscription is just sufficient for the bare social functions of the Association. The more important functions are dependent for their success on the liberality of sympathisers, and donations are earnestly requested for the above national objects from those who are in a position to contribute. The response since the reorganisation of the Association has been very encouraging, but much more is needed to place the Association on a secure basis for prosecuting the work outlined above.

Communications affecting Membership, or any of the objects of the Association, should be addressed to

THE HON. SECRETARY,

44, Queen's Road,

Bayswater, London, W.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

PERIODICALS CONNECTED WITH ARMENIA.

The Oriental World (formerly **Armenia**).—A monthly Literary and Political Magazine devoted to the literature and politics of the Near Eastern Countries. Edited and published by Arshag D. Mahdesian, 175, Fifth Avenue, New York, U.S.A. Foreign subscription \$2.00.

Pro Armenia.—An organ in support of reforms in Armenia and in Turkey. Annual subscription, 10 francs. 31, Villa d'Alesia, Paris XIV^e.

The Asiatic Review.—Noted for its articles on Eastern Politics, Finance, Literature and Art. Every six weeks, 2s. 6d. net. Annual subscription, £1 post free. Editorial Offices, Westminster Chambers, 8, Victoria Street, S.W.

The Friend of Armenia.—Published quarterly. Annual subscription, 1s. 47, Victoria Street, London, S.W.

BOOKS, PAMPHLETS, MAPS, &c.

Armenia.—Its People, Sufferings and Demands. The British Armenia Committee, Queen Anne's Chambers, Westminster, London. 1d.

The Truth about Armenia, by EMILY J. ROBINSON. 1d., by post 1½d. One doz. copies, 1s., or 7/6 for 100 copies, post free. Apply to Miss Robinson, 35a, Elsham Road, Kensington, London, W.

Map of Turkish Armenia.—Enlarged edition of the Map appearing in this periodical, on cloth to fold, in cover, 1s. per copy. Apply to Assistant Secretary, The Armenian United Association, 44, Queen's Road, Bayswater, London, W.

The Church of Armenia.—Her History, Doctrine, Rule, Discipline, Liturgy, Literature, and Existing Condition, by Mgr. Malachia Ormanian, translated by G. Marcar Gregory, V.D., 5s. net (postage 4d.). Apply to the translator, 36, Gunterstone Road, West Kensington, London, W.

Raffi's Works—Samuel, 8s.; Davit Beg, 8s.; Kaitzer I and II, 12s.; Khent, Djalaleddin, 5s.; Khamsai Meliks, 5s.; Persia, 5s.; Khachakogh, 5s.; Salbi, 8s.; Tachkahajk, 3s.; Zahrumar, 5s. Apply Mrs. Raffi, 32, Richmond Gardens, Shepherd's Bush, London, W.

The People of Armenia.—A lecture delivered in Paris by Archag Tchobanian, translated into English by G. Marcar Gregory. Published by J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., London, 1s. 6d. net. Now ready. Copies in any number can also be had through the Assistant Secretary, Armenian United Association, 44, Queen's Road, Bayswater, London, W.